



# Fayetteville VA Medical Center *Community Update*

Vol. 2 No. 7

Items of interest for our stakeholders

August 2011

## Brunswick County Clinic Opens

Veterans in Brunswick County now have a way of getting their health care closer to home.

The new Brunswick County Outreach Clinic was formally dedicated during a ribbon cutting ceremony Aug. 8. The facility, located in Supply, N.C., will start seeing patients on Aug. 15.

U.S. Rep. Mike McIntyre, Brunswick County Commissioner Charles Warren and Fayetteville VAMC Director Elizabeth Goolsby cut the ribbon officially opening the facility after a brief ceremony attended by more than 85 Veterans and other officials who braved 100-plus degree temperatures to be part of the event. McIntyre said it showed how much the community valued the new addition, and showed how the VA values the Veterans of Brunswick County.

"We care, we care, we care," McIntyre said. "There are 13,000 Veterans in Brunswick County who need the services where they are, so we need to bring the services to them.

The new clinic, located at 20 Medical Campus Drive, is 2,000 square feet and will consist of one PACT team – a provider, registered nurse, licensed practical nurse and a medical administration

specialist – who will provide primary care services for Veterans. The team will see patients Monday through Thursday, with other specialty care services using the facility each Friday.

Brunswick County Outreach Clinic joins Community Based Outpatient Clinics in Robeson County, Hamlet, Jacksonville and Wilmington, N.C., in providing greater access to care for Veterans covered by the Fayetteville VAMC. Plans call for another CBOC in Wayne County, as well as a new 80,000 square foot Multi-Specialty Outpatient Clinic in Wilmington. There are



**Rep. Mike McIntyre addresses the crowd of Veterans and other officials who braved 100-plus degree heat to attend the Brunswick County Outreach Clinic ribbon cutting ceremony Aug. 8 in Supply, N.C.**  
*Photo by Brad Garner*

also plans in place to expand the size of the Jacksonville CBOC to meet the growing patient load that comes with being adjacent to Camp Lejeune.

For Paul Fisher, a retired Army colonel who was part of a group of Brunswick County Veterans who lobbied to have a local clinic, the ribbon cutting was the culmination of several years of hard work.

"This is beautiful," Fisher said. "This has been a long time coming, and it's great to finally have it here."

— Ed Drohan

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# FVAMC makes its mark on Facebook

The Fayetteville VAMC is moving into the Social Media realm with the recent introduction of its new Facebook page.

The new site, [www.facebook.com/FayettevilleVAMC](http://www.facebook.com/FayettevilleVAMC), is one more source of information for area Veterans, said FVAMC Public Affairs Officer Ed Drohan.

"More and more of our Veterans gather their news and information from online sources," Drohan said. "We have to be able to use those sources to help keep our Veteran population informed about the happenings here and in the VA at large."

Rather than replacing other efforts, the FVAMC Facebook presence will supple-

ment communication channels already in use. In addition to the monthly Community Update newsletter and regular mailings from the medical center, the FVAMC Internet site is also a good source of information, Drohan explained.

**[www.Facebook.com/FayettevilleVAMC](http://www.Facebook.com/FayettevilleVAMC)**  
**[www.Fayettevillenc.va.gov](http://www.Fayettevillenc.va.gov)**

"We try to keep the information on our website up to date and add information of interest to Veterans, their families and other stakeholders regularly," he explained. "We envision Facebook as a way to enhance our Internet presence. There are limitations on Facebook as to how

long a message can be. We don't have those same limitations on our website, so I see this as a way of using one to supplement the other."

While an open exchange is encouraged on the new Facebook page, people are asked to remember this is a public site that can be viewed by people of all ages. "We want to keep this family oriented," Drohan said. "Also, people shouldn't post any personal medical information since it can be seen by anyone. If you have questions of a personal nature, please give us a call."

Also see [www.fayettevillenc.va.gov](http://www.fayettevillenc.va.gov).

— Ed Drohan

## Caregivers now eligible for assistance

Stipend, training, health insurance now available for those caring for Post 9/11 Veterans

The assistance provided to caregivers through the Caregiver Program continues to help numerous Veterans and those who care for them. The recent Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 has made additional resources available for eligible caregivers of seriously injured post 9/11 Veterans.

Currently, there are 26 applicants undergoing the process of eligibility in the Fayetteville area; 17 have already been approved to receive the assistance. The number of applicants in the area is considered high.

Ronita Bland, the former Fayetteville VAMC caregiver support coordinator, said she sees the need for the extra assistance provided to the caregiver.

"(Physicians) are seeing more severe medical injuries and an increase in the mental health issues that (post 9/11 Veterans) are experiencing. Often they feel that they don't have the support. This program was designed for their caregivers to provide them with the resources and assistance they need at home."

There are several steps necessary for caregivers to qualify for the enhanced benefits available under the program.

"Certain health conditions requirements are necessary for program eligibility," Bland said.

After a caregiver applies online, a clinician must do a clinical assessment of the Veteran to determine his/her level of need. Then the caregiver must complete formal caregiver training. Afterwards, VA staff conducts a home visit to determine the Veteran's needs and if the caregiver is able to meet those needs. Determination for eligibility is made after the process is reviewed. Once approved, the caregiver for the Veteran begins receiving a monthly stipend and gains

access to a variety of other resources, such as counseling services, respite care, health care insurance (if the caregiver doesn't already have insurance), and travel assistance.

While the recent enhancement of the Caregiver Program is currently only available for eligible post 9/11 Veterans, some services – such as respite care – are available for caregivers of Veterans from other eras as well. The VA is dedicated to assisting caregivers of all Veterans, and will continue to provide resources to help take care of them and their loved one who served our nation.

For more information on resources provided for caregivers, please call Walter Hair, caregiver support coordinator, at (910) 488-2120, ext. 5669 or visit

[www.caregiver.va.gov](http://www.caregiver.va.gov).

— Adara Ingram

**Community Update** is published monthly. The contents provide readers with information on programs and happenings at the Fayetteville VA Medical Center.

If you have questions or comments about the newsletter, email [edward.drohan@va.gov](mailto:edward.drohan@va.gov) or call (910) 488-2120, ext. 5991.

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# Veterans Transportation Service

## Free rides increase health care access for patients and caregivers

The Fayetteville VA Medical Center is the proud owner of three 12 passenger busses and one eight passenger van for the new Veteran's Transportation Service (VTS).

The VTS works in coordination with the Disabled American Veterans transportation system and is a viable alternative to using a personally owned vehicle or city transportation. Its mission is to improve the quality of life for Veterans by increasing their access to health care through innovative, efficient and integrated transportation assistance.

The new service provides no-hassle travel for Veterans. The hope is that by providing patients rides, Veterans and their caregivers will save time and money. Also, the number of missed appointments will likely decrease.

The shuttle runs every hour between the Fayetteville VA Medical Center and the Village Green Clinic. It also stops by the new dialysis center. Pickups begin promptly at 8:20 a.m. and end by 3:20 p.m. Future routes will include all of the community based outpatient clinics. More drivers are being hired to service these prospective routes and help meet the demand locally.

"I make sure that when and where pickup will be is announced at the VA and at Village Green," said Ernesto Navarro, one of the five drivers working in the VTS. Navarro and the other drivers are all Veterans themselves and agreed that serving those who served is the purpose for their job.

"We're here for the Veteran," Navarro said.

All Veterans who are enrolled in the VA and have a scheduled appointment are eligible for a ride. They can be accompanied by a maximum of two caregivers. Patients who choose the transportation system will not receive travel pay.

The shuttles have comfortable, plush chairs with arm and head rests. They are equipped with surveillance cameras, wheel chair

lifts, and even blankets to ensure the ride is convenient and comfortable for the Veteran. "The windows are tinted for patient privacy," Navarro said. They also have new GPS sys-

tems. These systems have the capability to locate a Veteran in need of transportation simply by entering their address. It will also store the address for future pickups. This added feature makes home pickups and drop offs a future option.

— Adara Ingram



### Shuttle Schedule

Monday–Friday

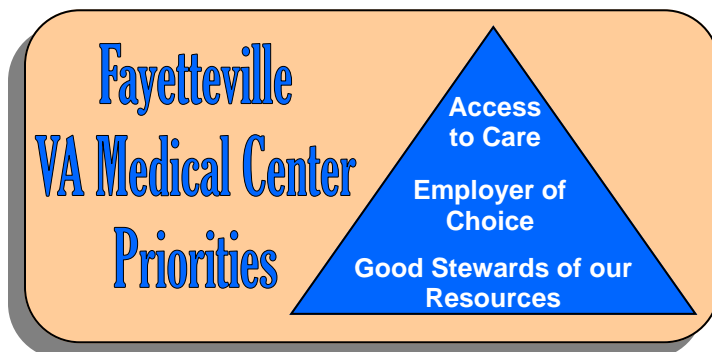
8:20 a.m.	—	VA shuttle leaving for Village Green
9:20 a.m.	—	VA Shuttle leaving for Medical Center
10:20 a.m.	—	VA shuttle leaving for Village Green
11:20 a.m.	—	VA Shuttle leaving for Medical Center
12:20 p.m.	—	VA shuttle leaving for Village Green
1:20 p.m.	—	VA Shuttle leaving for Medical Center
2:20 p.m.	—	VA shuttle leaving for Village Green
3:20 p.m.	—	VA Shuttle leaving for Medical Center

## We're open for suggestions — what do you want to see here?

Community Update is a newsletter for stakeholders of the Fayetteville VA Medical Center — Veterans, caregivers, family members and anyone who has an interest in the medical center. As such, we try to offer articles of interest to our readers, but we need your help as well.

If there's a particular topic you'd like to see covered in this newsletter, let us know and we'll do everything possible to get the information you're looking for. We do ask that suggested topics be of broad interest so that as many people as possible will find the information useful. Remember, though, that this isn't a forum to ask questions about personal health care issues. Due to privacy issues, those kinds of questions should be directed to Patient Advocates or other hospital personnel one on one.

Please send your suggestions or questions to Ed Drohan, Fayetteville VAMC Public Affairs Officer, at [edward.drohan@va.gov](mailto:edward.drohan@va.gov).





# FVAMC helps with 'Extreme Makeover'

Volunteers and staff members from the Fayetteville VA Medical Center helped tear down and rebuild the Steps N Stages Jubilee House in Fayetteville from July 15-21 as part of the national TV show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*. The shelter for homeless women Veterans is owned and operated by Barbara

Marshall, a disabled Navy Veteran, as a non-profit organization and was chosen from among thousands of applicants to have the home completely rebuilt. Special guests included a 96-year-old female World War II Veteran and First Lady Michelle Obama.

The show is set to air on ABC-TV on Oct. 21.



Clockwise from top left — (1) Women Veterans volunteers in red shirts sign a painted wooden flag that will hang in the rebuilt Jubilee House before the literally pulled down the old home July 15. (2) The brand new Jubilee House stands ready to provide shelter for homeless women Veterans. (3) A women Veteran talks Paul Dimeo, one of the show's designers, during a break in filming. (4) Veterans and other volunteers go flying as the house gives way under pressure from the rope they were pulling. (5) Sabrina Soto, right, a new designer on the show, talks with World War II Veteran Evelyn Long of Fayetteville and FVAMC staff member Angie Moore during filming for the special project portion of the show. Photos 1, 3, 4, 5 by Ed Drohan; Photo 2 courtesy of DOD by Elaine Sanchez





## Quilter honored for work with Fayetteville VAMC

To say that Geraldine Odom, better known as Jerry, sews would be a drastic understatement. Jerry creates works of hope on a regular basis.

"It's one of those things that not everybody can do...not everybody sews," she said. "I just happen to be one of those people who do."

Being the oldest of 10 siblings has given her many opportunities to perfect her craft.

"I sewed from the time I was a tiny little girl," she said. "I'm not a tiny little girl anymore, I'm a wrinkled old woman, but I still quilt."

Jerry produces fabric masterpieces on a regular basis. She sews baby quilts for new additions in the community and Christmas stockings for children in foster care. She sews clothing for disadvantaged children in Honduras and Haiti with her church group. Whenever a niece or nephew of hers gets married, it is certain that one of the wedding gifts will be a handmade quilt from Aunt Jerry.

Jerry is also a committed member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR). It is her membership in the DAR that led to her quilted creations arriving at the Fayetteville VA Medical Center.

"As a DAR member, we take things up to the VA hospital... I co-chair the VA hospital sections with my daughter. We take magazines, books, all sorts of things to the Veterans."

These items have come to include Jerry's lap robes, intended for keeping Veterans warm and comforted during their stay in the community living centers. Each quilt is hand-made and personally given as a keepsake to Veterans. They usually consist of the colors Veterans are most



**Geraldine Odom works on a new quilt that, when completed, will be donated to a Veteran at the Fayetteville VAMC.**

*Photo by Adara Ingram*

proud of—red, white, and blue.

"(They) are really nice for them when they are in wheelchairs...or (they can) fold it across their bed," Jerry said.

She has no idea how many she's made for the residents.

"I quit counting," she sighed.

Her quilts have warmed the hearts of innumerable Veterans and their families, including those who have passed. Jerry contributed two twin size quilts for long-term patients in the community living center who died. In their honor, the rooms where they once resided are set up as a temporary memorial using her quilts. It provides the staff and family members an opportunity for a final goodbye.

With every stitch in one of her lap robes, she imparts gratitude and honor for the Veterans.

"When you visit the VA hospital...and you see all of these (people), some of them have been here for years," Jerry said. "A lot of them have no visitors...I make lap quilts for (them)...That's really behind what I do."

Jerry is quite humble in discussing her generosity. Her daughter, Ella Maugans, who also helps distribute lap robes, recognized her mother's efforts as something

worth noting. She nominated her mom to stitch into the national 9/11 flag.

This flag is considered the modern day version of the star spangled banner. Previously damaged in the September 11 World Trade Center attacks, it is being reconstructed using pieces of American flags from around the country.

During its nationwide tour, the flag is paraded through towns and hung on display. Honorees from each state and their family mem-

bers are given the opportunity to stitch a piece of the flag back together.

Ella's nomination of her mother was accepted, and on July 4, 2011, after a ride on a float in a prestigious parade in Southport, N.C., Jerry made her mark on national history doing what she has done nearly all of her life — she stitched together red, white, and blue cloth, and in doing so, created a seamless piece of hope for many.

"I had three daughters, a son in law, and grandchildren and my husband who all got to put a stitch in the flag. That was the most moving ceremony I have been to in a long time."

Jerry has since settled back in to her home, and yes, she continues sewing works of art for children and Veterans alike.

With every stitch, Jerry weaves together a thank-you to the Veterans who have served our country. According to her, she does not intend to stop showing her appreciation any time soon.

"It's a labor of love for these Veterans. If you can do something for them, you should be doing it...I can't do a lot of visiting, but I can quilt."

— Adara Ingram

# VA announces new core values

Core Values and Characteristics that apply universally across all of VA have been approved. The five Core Values define “who we are,” our culture and how we care for Veterans, their families and other beneficiaries. The Values are **Integrity**, **Commitment**, **Advocacy**, **Respect** and **Excellence** (“I CARE”). The Core Characteristics define “what we stand for,” and help guide how we will perform our core mission; they shape our strategy, and will influence resource allocation and other important decisions made within VA. The Characteristics are **Trustworthy**, **Accessible**, **Quality**, **Agile**, **Innovative**, and **Integrated**.

The process used to develop these Core Values and Characteristics was comprehensive, collaborative, inclusive, involved participants from VA Central Office and all three VA Administrations, and took nearly two years.



This transformational journey began in 2009 by asking important questions, such as, “How well are we performing our mission?”, “What is changing in our operating environment and how do we respond to that change?”, “What is working, and what isn’t working so well, and why?”, etc.

The participants from the many different VA organizations provided considerable input into the development of the Core Values and Characteristics. Additionally, critical thinking around these Core Values and Characteristics included input from the VA

workforce through surveys and feedback as well as discussions on myriad of topics. Based on these activities, and the recommendations of the different panels and groups, the Secretary approved the Core Values and Characteristics.

The VA Core Values and Characteristics are explained in more detail below.

## Because **I CARE**, I will...

### **I**ntegrity

Act with high moral principle. Adhere to the highest professional standards. Maintain the trust and confidence of all with whom I engage.

### **C**ommitment

Work diligently to serve Veterans and other beneficiaries. Be driven by an earnest belief in VA’s mission. Fulfill my individual responsibilities and organizational responsibilities.

### **A**dvocacy

Be truly Veteran-centric by identifying, fully considering, and appropriately advancing the interests of Veterans and other beneficiaries.

### **R**espect

Treat all those I serve and with whom I work with dignity and respect. Show respect to earn it.

### **E**xcellence

Strive for the highest quality and continuous improvement. Be thoughtful and decisive in leadership, accountable for my actions, willing to admit mistakes, and rigorous in correcting them.

## VA Core Characteristics

### **Trustworthy**

VA earns the trust of those it serves — every day — through the actions of all employees. They provide care, benefits, and services with compassion, dependability, effectiveness, and transparency.

### **Accessible**

VA engages and welcomes Veterans and other beneficiaries, facilitating their use of the entire array of its services. Each interaction will be positive and productive.

### **Quality**

VA provides the highest standard of care and services to Veterans and beneficiaries while managing the cost of its programs and being efficient stewards of all resources entrusted to it by the American people. VA is a model of unrivalled excellence due to employees who are empowered, trusted by their leaders, and respected for their competence and dedication.

### **Innovative**

VA prizes curiosity and initiative, encourages creative contributions from all employees, seeks continuous improvement, and adapts to remain at the forefront in knowledge, proficiency, and capability to deliver the highest standard of care and services to all of the people it serves.

### **Agile**

VA anticipates and adapts quickly to current challenges and new requirements by continuously assessing the environment in which it operates and devising solutions to better serve Veterans, other beneficiaries, and Service members.

### **Integrated**

VA links care and services across the Department; other federal, state, and local agencies; partners; and Veterans Services Organizations to provide useful and understandable programs to Veterans and other beneficiaries. VA’s relationship with the Department of Defense is unique, and VA will nurture it for the benefit of Veterans and Service members.

**Please share this information with  
your fellow Veterans**

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